




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance; Livingston, Mr J

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.50 pm): Yesterday the Andrews Labor government released its first Victorian state budget. It is fair to say it was a budget in the finest traditions of the Labor Party. The forecast surpluses bequeathed to them by the former coalition government have been almost halved. They are relying on huge growth in future tax receipts to deliver on their surplus promise. State taxes are up by more than \$1.1 billion. They have no plan to build the infrastructure the state needs, and they have loosened the reins on employee expenses, which are set to jump 7.6 per cent next year.

It is also fair to say that the Victorian budget serves as an example of what we can expect to see when the Palaszczuk government hands down its first budget in July. Queensland Labor went into the last election promising to pay down debt, to deliver surpluses and not to increase taxes, but one only has to look at the past to know what is coming. The previous Labor government set Queensland on the path to more than \$85 billion in debt. Taxes per person almost doubled under Labor as car registration went through the roof. Home owners were slugged with increased property taxes and public transport users were slugged with 15 per cent year-on-year fare increases. From 2005-06 onwards expenditure grew at almost double the rate of revenue. Employee expenses, the largest component of government expenses, grew at an average rate of 8.6 per cent per annum over the decade to 2011-12.

We restricted government expenses growth to just 0.1 per cent in our first two years in office. We were able to set the budget back on the path to surplus despite revenue writedowns totalling almost \$6 billion. We left office forecasting three fiscal surpluses—real surpluses over the next three years which the current Treasurer committed to delivering during the election campaign. But I am concerned the good work done by the LNP is going to be unwound by a government that owes too much to its union masters. That is obviously what we are seeing happen in Victoria. We simply do not have the fiscal capacity to see the same thing happen here.

The latest midyear update from Queensland Treasury predicts employee expenses growth of 3.7 per cent from 2013-14 to 2017-18. My fear is that the Premier and Treasurer, who said they had a budget strategy that would allow them to deliver a promised surplus and pay down debt, will not have the ticker, ability or discipline to deliver.

In the time left available to me, I want to make a condolence statement for the former principal of Kirwan State High School. John Livingston passed away last night. He was a giant of education in this state. He was principal of Kirwan State High, which is an outstanding school, for nearly 30 years. I join with the member for Thuringowa, and I am sure all people in Education Queensland, to acknowledge John. He was diagnosed with brain cancer only a few months ago, just after we had a principal round table at Thuringowa State High. Within a month of that round table he was diagnosed. He had been in a hospice recently. I want to pass on to his family the condolences of the opposition and all of the community of education in Queensland.